

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

Adm



Approved for Release
Date Oct. 1956

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

GROUP ONE, NO. 1
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
CLASSIFIED
EXCLUDED FROM TOP SECRET ☒ 1940
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The tone and content of Khrushchev's conversations with Ambassador McCloy on 26 and 27 July suggest that the Soviet leader still prefers to avoid a showdown over Berlin but feels obligated to adopt an increasingly strong line in response to Western moves. His principal motive in these talks was to inject a further note of alarm over Berlin and intensify pressure for the West to take the initiative in reopening negotiations.

Khrushchev sought to provide an incentive for a Western move by suggesting an exchange of proposals. He was careful to indicate that his offer to negotiate on a peace treaty remained "valid and open." He also went to some lengths to point out that the USSR was prepared to accept any US proposals on guarantees for the "freedom and independence" of West Berlin after the conclusion of a peace treaty.

Khrushchev's remarks suggest that he will make a vigorous public response to the President's address but will be careful not to foreclose the possibility of negotiations. Khrushchev also made an effort to improve his bargaining position by implying that some new Soviet defense measures were under consideration.

In further moves to reinforce the impression of military readiness to deal with a crisis over Berlin, speeches and official pronouncements in connection with Soviet Naval Day activities emphasized the ability of the Navy to attack surface ships at great distances. In a 29 July Pravda article Admiral Gorshakov stated that the West "would do well" to realize that their "traditional invulnerability has been liquidated forever." A display of Soviet naval strength off Leningrad included about 60 surface ships and submarines and a naval air fly-by of 36 mis-

sile-equipped bomber jet fighters.

Berlin

In his first speech on the Berlin question and repeated his position in essentially the same terms he has used since the Vienna meeting, with particular emphasis on Soviet determination to conclude a peace treaty "under any conditions."

Khrushchev referred to Soviet proposals for agreement on a peace treaty, stating that the USSR was not seeking a clash with the US and that "launching the Berlin bomb" would clear the atmosphere. He said he fully realized the danger of the approaching situation, but he added that no efforts at intimidation would keep the Soviet Union from signing a peace treaty. Khrushchev invited the West to advance proposals and suggested that the Soviet Union might have some counterproposals to make.

In their second conversation, Khrushchev turned to the President's speech of 25 July and claimed that the President had presented an ultimatum which if not accepted would mean war. Khrushchev declared that the USSR accepted this "challenge" and would not change its policy on Germany and Berlin. He stated that he planned to meet with his military advisers, review the situation, and decide on measures to strengthen Soviet defenses.

Khrushchev doubted that the USSR would follow the US in mobilization of armed forces and industrial power, since he believed a war would be thermonuclear. He emphasized alleged Soviet missile superiority and reiterated his intention to consult with the Soviet general staff. Deliberately misconstruing the President's position in his address, Khrushchev

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SPECIAL ARTICLES

... that the Soviet people
had to be informed that the US
could start a war if a separate
treaty were signed. He claimed,
in effect, that a separate
treaty would indeed be signed.

The Soviet premier ended
his discussion, however, on a
conciliatory note. He stated
that he still believed in the
President's "reason" and pointed
out that Western consultations
could be necessary and it was
uncertain whether the US' allies
would start war. In any event,
he continued, Soviet proposals
for negotiations on a peace
treaty remained and the USSR
wished to resolve the problem
of Berlin "peacefully."

... would grow in the USSR because
of the Berlin situation, and
that if the US intensified its
"threats" over a German peace
treaty, he might not be able to
resist pressure for resumption.
He boasted that the USSR had a
100-megaton thermonuclear weapon
which needed to be tested.

On the general disarmament
talks, Khrushchev adopted a pose
of flexibility and reasonableness
and stated that the Soviets were
prepared to agree to any US meas-
ures in the first stage of a
complete and general disarmament
program. Echoing his speech of
8 July, he listed a number of
first-stage measures such as a
partial troop withdrawal, a nu-
clear-free zone, inspection
zones against surprise attack,
and nonaggression pacts.

At the end of the conversa-
tion, Khrushchev referred to an
aide-memoire which was subsequent-
ly submitted to the US in the bi-
lateral talks in Moscow. This
memorandum represented a tactical
shift in the Soviet position by
putting forward a set of prin-
ciples to serve as a guide to
future multilateral negotiations.
In a further tactical switch,
the Soviets agreed to a recess
and indicated they would be pre-
pared to resume negotiations in
September in New York. Previous-
ly the Soviet delegation had
argued that a discussion of de-
tailed disarmament plans was
necessary in order to reach
agreement on principles.

While the new set of prin-
ciples does not signal any shift
in the substantive Soviet posi-
tion, the move to salvage some
agreement out of the US-Soviet
bilateral talks may have been
influenced by the Soviet leaders'
concern over the Berlin situa-
tion. They may regard further
bilateral talks with the US as
a form of insurance against a
mounting crisis over Berlin. Mos-
cow's shift may have also been
due in part to the publication
of the Soviet party program,
which stresses "universal and
total disarmament" as one of the
main tasks for Soviet foreign
policy. (SECRET NOFORN)

Disarmament

In his conversations with
McCloy, Khrushchev implied that
the future of disarmament talks
might be influenced by develop-
ments over Berlin. He alleged
that pressure for resuming tests

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